

Regional Transportation Plan

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) was released by TRPA in August 2000. This is the official State and Federally recognized Regional Transportation Plan required of Regional Transportation Planning Agencies and Metropolitan Planning Organizations. The RTP is currently going through an update process scheduled to be complete by early 2004. The 2004 update will begin the process of incorporating the 2000 RTP and TRPA's 1992 RTP/Air Quality Plan into one uniform document. (The 1992 RTP/AQP is not the State and Federally recognized Regional Transportation Plan, but is a TRPA Plan required by the Agency's Federal Compact requirements.)

Lake Tahoe Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

The Lake Tahoe Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan was released in Draft form in August of 2001, and is currently in the process of being finalized by TRPA. The Master Plan is intended to provide a blueprint for developing a regional bikeway and pedestrian system that includes both on-street and off-street facilities as well as support facilities and programs throughout the Lake Tahoe region. The Master Plan includes a map of proposed facilities for the region. Within the project corridor, SR-89 is designated as a proposed Class III Bike Route from the terminus of the Pope-Baldwin Bike Path north to D.L. Bliss State Park, and as Class II bike lanes from D.L. Bliss to Meeks Bay, where it will connect to the planned extension of the West Shore Bike Path.

Fallen Leaf Lake and Emerald Bay Transportation Study

The Fallen Leaf Lake and Emerald Bay Transportation Study was prepared by the TRPA in 1998. The purpose of the study was to identify transportation problems along the SR-89 corridor near Fallen Leaf Lake and Emerald Bay, and to evaluate alternatives to improve transportation in the area. Problems identified in the Emerald Bay area were primarily related to insufficient parking supply for the high-demand recreational areas, including Vikingsholm, Inspiration Point, the Bayview trailhead, and Eagle Falls. Data collection efforts included traffic volume counts, parking counts, vehicle travel time, parked vehicle surveys, and an on-board survey of riders of the Emerald Bay Tram. Data and conclusions from the Fallen Leaf Lake and Emerald Bay Transportation Study will be described in more detail in the discussion of transit-related alternatives in the SR-89 Bikeway Study.

County of El Dorado

El Dorado County covers about 1,800 square miles, extending from the foothills above the Sacramento Valley east to the southwest portion of Lake Tahoe. El Dorado County is bordered by Placer County on the north, Sacramento County on the west, Amador County on the south, Alpine County to the southeast, and the State of Nevada to the east. El Dorado County is home to about 158,000 residents; South Lake Tahoe is the largest city in the County, with a population of about 24,000 residents, followed by Placerville with just under 10,000 residents. The El Dorado County main government offices are located in Placerville. The entire project area is located within unincorporated El Dorado County.

El Dorado County General Plan

The current El Dorado County General Plan was adopted in January 1996, and provides for long-range direction and policy for the use of land within the County. The General Plan is currently in

the process of being updated. The following policies of the Tahoe Basin element of the current General Plan apply to the proposed project:

Objective 11.1.12, Parks and Recreation: Development of recreational facilities for the differing needs of residents through utilization of available outdoor recreation capacity.

Policy 11.1.12.4: Plan, develop, and maintain a network of County-wide regional trails that connect incorporated and unincorporated areas through cooperative efforts with the City of South Lake Tahoe, the Tahoe Conservancy, and other agencies.

Objective 11.2.2, Regional Bikeways: Locate regional bikeways where environmentally, physically, and economically feasible.

Policy 11.2.2.1: The County shall continue working with Caltrans to develop bicycle trails along designated scenic highways within State right-of-ways.

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board

The Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) is one of the nine regional boards of the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). The SWRCB, a branch of the California Environmental Protection Agency, was created by the Legislature in 1967. The mission of the RWQCBs is to develop and enforce water quality objectives and implementation plans that will best protect the beneficial uses of the State's waters. Each RWQCB is responsible for developing a Water Quality Control Plan (commonly called the "Basin Plan") for their hydrologic areas, issuing waste discharge requirements, taking enforcement action against violators, and monitoring water quality. The Lahontan Region (Region 6) includes about 20 percent of California from the Oregon border south along the eastern crest of the Sierra Nevada through the northern Mojave Desert. The project area is located within the Lake Tahoe Hydrologic Unit.

Lahontan Basin Plan

The Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region (Basin Plan) sets forth water quality standards for surface and ground waters of the region. The Basin Plan identifies types of water quality problems that can threaten beneficial uses within the Region, and required or recommended control measures for those problems. The Lahontan Basin Plan was most recently updated in 1994.

Chapters 5.7 and 5.8 of the Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region (Basin Plan) describe Regional Board concerns regarding development in SEZs and floodplains. Chapters 5.7-7 and 5.8-7,8 specify findings which must be made before the Regional Board can grant exemptions to prohibitions against new development or permanent disturbance in SEZs or grant exceptions to the 100-year floodplain discharge prohibitions in cases where the floodplain is not also a SEZ. Proposed bikeway improvements discussed in this document that would impact SEZ or wetland areas would be subject to these regulations and permitting requirements.

U.S. Forest Service

Established in 1905, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) is an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Forest Service manages public lands in 155 national forests and 20 national grasslands. USFS lands encompass about 191 million acres, about 8.5 percent of the total land area of the United States. The Lake Tahoe Basin contains portions of three national forests: the El Dorado, Tahoe, and Toiyabe National Forests. The national forest lands in the Tahoe Basin are managed by the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit of the USFS. Much of the land along SR-89 within the project corridor is within the El Dorado National Forest.

California State Parks

The California Department of Parks and Recreation manages more than 260 park units, which contain the finest and most diverse collection of natural, cultural, and recreational resources to be found within California. California State Parks contains the largest and most diverse natural and cultural heritage holdings of any state agency in the nation. State park units include nearly 1.3 million acres, with over 280 miles of coastline; 625 miles of lake and river frontage; nearly 18,000 campsites; and 3,000 miles of hiking, biking, and equestrian trails.

Within the project area, major State Parks holdings include Emerald Bay State Park, D.L. Bliss State Park, and Sugar Pine Point State Park.

California Tahoe Conservancy

The California Tahoe Conservancy is an independent State agency within the Resources Agency of the State of California. It was established in its present form by State law in 1984. Its jurisdiction extends only to the California side of the Lake Tahoe Basin. The Conservancy is not a regulatory agency. It was established to develop and implement programs through acquisitions and site improvements to improve water quality in Lake Tahoe, preserve the scenic beauty and recreational opportunities of the region, provide public access, preserve wildlife habitat areas, and manage and restore lands to protect the natural environment.

Tahoe City Public Utility District

The Tahoe City Public Utility District (TCPUD) manages water, sewer and parks and recreation facilities in the Tahoe City area and along the west shore of Lake Tahoe. The TCPUD jurisdiction encompasses about 23 square miles, extending from the Nevada State line on the north shore around the west side of the Lake to the northern part of Emerald Bay. The TCPUD manages the Tahoe Trailways Bike Path system, approximately 15 miles of paved pathways extending out from Tahoe City.

Washoe Tribe

The Washoe Tribe of California and Nevada currently operates the Meeks Bay Resort and Marina, located on approximately 350 acres of land, on a 30-year lease from the USFS. This facility includes cabins, an RV campground, marina and boat launch, and a general store.

LAND USE

The project corridor is entirely within unincorporated El Dorado County. The nearest city to the project area is the City of South Lake Tahoe, located approximately four miles east of the Cascade area.

RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES

As noted above, the only incorporated community in the vicinity of the corridor is the City of South Lake Tahoe. However, a number of unincorporated communities are present along the west shore of the Lake.

Cascade Properties

The Cascade Properties neighborhood is a small private residential area located adjacent to Cascade Creek. Access is provided off of private Cascade Road and Sugar Pine Road, unpaved roads.

US Forest Service Summer Homes, Emerald Bay

Two small clusters of summer homes are located on USFS lands along the west side of Emerald Bay, one upslope of the highway and the other downslope. Access to these homes is provided via unpaved roads off SR-89, both located north of the top of the viaduct.

Rubicon Bay and Meeks Bay

The Rubicon Bay-Meeks Bay communities comprise a large residential area on the west shore. Rubicon Bay includes a small number of private homes located along 1 Ring, 2 Ring, 3 Ring and 4 Ring Roads, as well as the larger neighborhoods including Forest Drive, Sierra Drive, Victoria Drive, and on the west side of SR-89 Lower Scenic Drive, Silvertip Drive. The Meeks Bay community continues north from the Rubicon Bay neighborhood, along Meeks Bay Avenue. Another residential area is located on the west side of SR-89 off Glenwood Parkway.

RECREATIONAL AREAS

Much of the SR-89 corridor is bordered by public lands, including USFS National Forest lands and California State Park lands. These areas, along with private recreational facilities, provide numerous recreational opportunities.

Camp Richardson

The Camp Richardson area includes a number of recreational and historic uses on USFS land stretching between Pope Beach and Baldwin Beach. The Camp Richardson Resort and Marina, operated by a private concessionaire, is a year-round recreational destination that includes over 300 campsites, a historic hotel and lakefront cabins, a beachfront bar and restaurant, and a full-service marina. Other uses in the area include a USFS Visitor's Center, riding stables, and a Stream Profile chamber on Taylor Creek. The Tallac Historic site, Pope Estate, and Valhalla Estate are also located in the Camp Richardson area.

Fallen Leaf Lake

The Fallen Leaf Lake area is a popular recreational destination on the southwest shore. The Lake provides boating, fishing and swimming opportunities, and offers a starting point for trails leading into Desolation Wilderness. The Fallen Leaf Campground is a USFS campground at the north end of the lake, located south of SR-89 off of Fallen Leaf Lake Road. The campground provides over 200 campsites, and is open from May through October.

El Dorado National Forest

The El Dorado National Forest stretches from the Sierra foothills near Placerville to the southwestern portion of Lake Tahoe, encompassing approximately one million acres of land. The Forest is bordered by the Tahoe National Forest on the north, the Stanislaus National Forest on the south, and the Toiyabe National Forest on the east. Vegetation within the El Dorado National Forest include chaparral, conifer, fir, and subalpine communities, with elevations ranging from approximately 1,500 feet to over 10,000 feet. The El Dorado National Forest includes two wilderness areas: the 64,000-acre Desolation Wilderness in the southwest portion of the Tahoe Basin, and the 105,000-acre Mokelumne Wilderness south of Highway 88.

Emerald Bay State Park

Emerald Bay State Park is a 600-acre park located on the southwest shore of Lake Tahoe, about five miles from South Lake Tahoe. The Park includes the historic Vikingsholm mansion, considered one of the best examples of Scandinavian architecture in the western hemisphere and Fannette Island, the only island on Lake Tahoe. Hiking trails (including the Rubicon Trail), a public boat dock, and public beach access are available at Emerald Bay. Emerald Bay is a designated State Underwater Park, where divers can view artifacts from the boats and watercraft used on the Lake before the turn of the century.

Emerald Bay State Park includes a boat-in campground, on the north side of the Bay approximately one-half mile east of Fannette Island. The boat-in campground offers 20 campsites, and is open from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Camping is also available at Eagle Point campground, on the south side of the Bay, which has 100 campsites and is open from mid-June through Labor Day. Camping is also available at the Bayview Campground, located in USFS lands on the south side of SR-89, across from Inspiration Point.

Access to Emerald Bay State Park is provided off SR-89. Parking for day-use activities is available at three formal parking lots along SR-89: Inspiration Point, Eagle Falls, and Vikingsholm (Harvey West lot). The Eagle Point campground has its own access road extending north off the highway just before the moraine ridgeline.

D.L. Bliss State Park

D.L. Bliss State Park is a 1,200-acre park located immediately north of Emerald Bay State Park, on the western shore of Lake Tahoe. The Park stretches from Emerald Point to Rubicon Bay, and its recreational attractions include the Balancing Rock Nature Trail, the Rubicon Trail, and public beaches. The park includes 170 campsites, including beach camping at Lester Beach on Rubicon Bay. The Park is open from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Access to D.L. Bliss State Park is provided off SR-89. The Park Headquarters is located at the main entrance road, approximately two miles north of the Vikingsholm parking area.

Meeks Bay

Meeks Bay campground is a USFS campground that is operated by California Land Management, a private concessionaire. The campground is located on the west shore of the lake, ten miles south of Tahoe City on SR-89. There are 40 developed sites at the Meeks Bay campground. The campground is open from mid-May through mid-September.

The Meeks Bay Resort and Marina features camping, a marina, a beach, and a general store, operated by the Washoe Tribe under permit from the USFS. The resort's campground includes 10 RV sites and 20 campsites, as well as lodging in cabins. The Meeks Bay Resort and Marina is located adjacent to the Forest Service campground along SR-89, on the north side of Meeks Creek.

Sugar Pine Point State Park

Sugar Pine Point State Park is a 2,000 acre park located just north of Meeks Bay on the west shore. With nearly two miles of lake frontage, the park has dense forests of pine, fir, aspen and juniper. Another attraction is the Hellman-Ehrman Mansion (also known as Pine Lodge), a summer home built in 1903 in a grove of pine and cedar. Recreational activities at the park include hiking, swimming, fishing, winter cross-country skiing, and a nature center. A short-term boat dock is located on the beach. Currently the West Shore bike path extending south from Tahoe City along SR-89 terminates within the boundaries of Sugar Pine Point State Park.

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

TRAFFIC VOLUMES

Traffic volumes fluctuate tremendously on the project corridor, depending on the season. SR-89 through Emerald Bay is often closed during winter due to avalanche or rock slide hazards. Table 2-1 illustrates 2001 traffic volumes on SR-89.

Table 2-1
2001 Traffic Volumes on Project Corridor

Mile	Description	Southbound			Northbound		
		Peak Hr.	Peak Mo.	AADT	Peak Hr.	Peak Mo.	AADT
13.24	Spring Creek Road	680	6,300	3,600	580	5,000	4,000
19.54	D.L Bliss State Park	580	5,000	4,000	380	4,500	3,000
22.77	Rubicon Glen Drive	380	4,500	3,000	760	7,000	3,800

Notes:

Peak Hr. = Peak hour traffic volume.

Peak Mo. = Peak month ADT. The average daily traffic for the month of heaviest traffic flow

AADT = Annual average daily traffic volume. The total volume for the year divided by 365 days

Source: Caltrans

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Tahoe Area Regional Transit

The Tahoe Area Regional Transit (TART) system began service on the north shore of Lake Tahoe in 1975. The system is currently operated by Placer County and operates from 6:10 A.M. to 6:30 P.M., seven days a week. The service operates on State Routes 28 and 89 along the northern and western shores of Lake Tahoe, from Incline Village, Nevada on the northeast to Sugar Pine Point State Park in El Dorado County on the southwest, and to Truckee via State Route 89. Service is generally provided on hourly headways with a base fare of \$1.25.

Tahoe Trolley

During the summer only, Tahoe Trolley provides service along the northern and western shores of Lake Tahoe along three coordinated routes; Crystal Bay-Tahoe City, Tahoe City-Squaw Valley and Tahoe City-Emerald Bay. Passengers can transfer between north/south segments and east/west segments. Trolleys operate from 10:30 A.M. until 10:30 P.M. seven days per week. Fares are equal to those of TART at \$1.25.

Nifty Fifty Trolley and Emerald Bay Tram

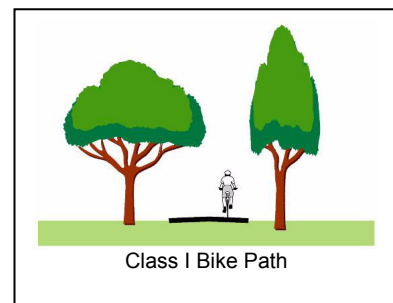
The Nifty Fifty Trolley was established in 1994 and currently operates two routes on the South Shore. Route A runs from Stateline to the South "Y" to Camp Richardson's Resort. Route B runs from Zephyr Cove to Stateline to Heavenly. In conjunction, during the summer season the Emerald Bay Tram runs every half-hour between Camp Richardson and Vikingsholm/Emerald Bay.

BIKEWAYS

Bikeway Classification Descriptions

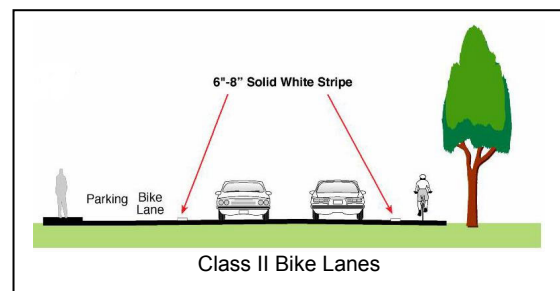
The three types of bikeways identified by Caltrans in Chapter 1000 of the Highway Design Manual are as follows.

Class I Bikeway. Typically called a “bike path” or “multi-use path” a Class I bikeway provides bicycle travel on a paved right-of-way completely separated from any street or highway. Class I bikeways are not for the exclusive use of bicyclists, and can also be used by pedestrians, joggers, and other non-motorized users.



Class II Bikeway. Often referred to as a “bike lane,” a Class II bikeway provides a striped and stenciled lane for one-way travel on a street or highway.

Class III Bikeway. Generally referred to as a “bike route,” a Class III bikeway provides for shared use with pedestrian or motor vehicle traffic and is



identified only by signing.

One of the greatest divergences of opinion lies between those who feel paved bike paths, separated from roadways, should be constructed wherever physically possible, versus those who feel more comfortable riding on streets on lanes or routes. This preference is usually based on personal feeling regarding comfort and safety.

There are also people who argue whether Class II bike lanes are effective, or conversely, that bike lanes should be installed wherever possible. Bike lanes provide an additional buffer between traffic and sidewalks, aiding pedestrians. When properly designed, bike lanes help improve the visibility of bicyclists. On streets with low traffic volumes and speeds (under 5,000 vehicles per day average, 30 mph), bike lanes may not be needed at all. This is based on the potential for serious conflicts being so low that the cost of installing bike lanes is not warranted.

Existing Bikeways

Pope-Baldwin Bike Path

The 3.4-mile Pope-Baldwin Path is maintained by the USFS. This off-street path extends west from SR-89 near the South Lake Tahoe City limits and runs along the north side of the highway, ending at SR-89 at Spring Creek Road. The trail extends through Camp Richardson, and provides access to Pope, Kiva, and Baldwin Beaches and the Tallac Historic Site.

South Lake Tahoe Bike Path

This path is maintained by the City of South Lake Tahoe, and begins on the north side of Lake Tahoe Boulevard (US-50) near El Dorado Beach. The off-street path runs adjacent to US-50, crossing Trout Creek and the Truckee River, and ends on a residential street west of the Truckee River. Bike Route signage directs cyclists on street west and north through the neighborhood toward the Pope-Baldwin Path along SR-89.

West Shore Bike Path

The West Shore Bike Path is part of a network of bikeways maintained by the Tahoe City Public Utility District in the vicinity of Tahoe City. The 9-mile West Shore segment extends south from Tahoe City south along SR-89 to Sugar Pine Point State Park. The majority of this segment exists as a separate off-street path adjacent to the highway, requiring some uncontrolled highway crossings where the path switches between the east and west sides of the roadway. Some short sections require riding on the highway shoulder or detouring onto residential streets. The TCPUD currently has plans to extend the West Short Path from Sugar Pine Point to Meeks Bay.

INTERSECTIONS

Intersections and side roads along the SR-89 project corridor are described briefly below.

Spring Creek Road

Spring Creek Road provides access to the Spring Creek USFS summer home tract. This road is paved at its junction with SR-89.